

# Zero Beat

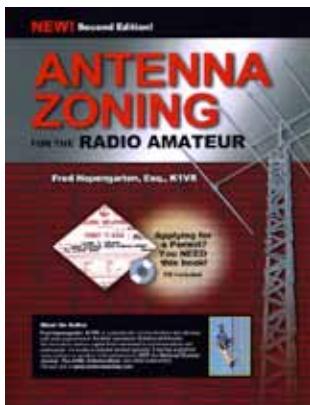


Hampden County Radio Association

January 2014

## Next HCRA Meeting

**Friday, January 3rd**  
**Guest Speaker Fred**  
**Hopengarten – K1VR**



Bundle up and come on out to HCRA's January meeting where guest speaker Fred Hopengarten, K1VR, will discuss the legal aspects of antennas and towers. Fred is the author of the book *Antenna Zoning For The Radio Amateur*, published by the ARRL and has been a lawyer handling federal communication law since 1990. His presentations are filled with

advice on working with local governments and zoning regulations as well as success stories from his clients who have hit legal roadblocks. We are looking forward to his presentation and hope that you will join us.

For this month's Tech Corner Bob K1YO will be discussing some of the major points on HF Mobile installation.

Along with Fred and Bob's presentations, we will be discussing regular club business and future events, selling raffle tickets for the FT-857, taking membership renewals for 2013/2014, and taking deposits for remaining WRTC equipment that the club is selling at a discount to members. (*Editor's note: Not much left!*) Meeting starts at 7:30PM (Tech Corner at 7:00pm) Holyoke Medical Center Auxiliary Conference Center, 575 Beech St., Holyoke.

## What's in this issue:

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## "Show and Tell"

## Coming in March

I hope everyone's recent gift wishes came true as we finish up the holiday season. Maybe you picked up a new radio, kit or parts for a project that you've wanted to complete.



Or maybe over the last year you've made some key station improvements that you would like to share with others. Your chance to do just that is coming up very

soon. Our HCRA meeting on March 7th will be our annual Show & Tell where members have a chance to show off projects they've completed or are in the



process of finishing up. Start thinking about what project you might want to give a short 5-minute presentation on along with a brief Q&A.



There is still plenty of time to start a new project and have it completed before the meeting. Remember, Show & Tell doesn't necessarily mean cutting edge technology. We just want to know what everyone has been up to!

Don't forget to replace the batteries in your smoke alarms before you get started!

73,

Matt – W1MSW



# Local happenings

(All times are local time)

**Sundays:** 0845: Western Mass Emergency Net 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

**First Monday:** Southwick Regional RACES Drill, 1845, 146.49 Simplex

**Mondays:** 1930: HCRA 10m Net 28.375

**Tuesdays:** 1930-2000: 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R - Hampshire County Emergency Net

**Wednesdays:** 1930: MTARA Info net 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R - includes NTS Net

2000: MTARA Swap net: 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

2000: MTARA Simplex Net - starts on 146.94 - PL 127.3, then goes to 146.42 direct (simplex) Usually starts immediately following the swap net.

**Thursdays:** 2100: Weather Net (Roger, K1PAI Net Control), 1st Thursday of every month: 147.090 MHz, All other

Thursdays: 147.000, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

**Fridays:** 1200: BB's (Brown Baggers Luncheon)

Munich House  
13 Center Street  
Chicopee, MA 01013

Expect between 6 and 12 attendees every Friday. Good food, great company!

## Club meetings & VE sessions

**1st Friday of the month** 7:30 PM, HCRA Club Meeting, Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Conference Center, 575 Beech St. Holyoke MA 01040 (no meetings held in July or August.) <http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/>

**No December meeting—Holiday Party December 9th**

**3rd Friday of the month** 7:30 PM, MTARA Club meeting, Red Cross building 506 Cottage St, Springfield, Mass. (no meetings held in July or August)

**4th Friday of the month** 6:00 PM, Technician, General, and Extra Class License Exams, Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Conference Center, 575 Beech Street, Holyoke, Mass. Hosted by the Western Mass VE Team (WMVET). Contact: David Cote, [w1fab@arrl.net](mailto:w1fab@arrl.net)

**Third Monday of the month** 7:00 PM, Franklin County Amateur Radio Club meeting, Greenfield High School (no meetings held in July or August) <http://www.fcarc.org/>

**4th Monday of February, May, August, November** 7:00 PM, FCARC VE Exams, Unitarian Church, Main Street, Northfield <http://www.fcarc.org/>

Join the ARRL or renew your membership!

ARRL members enjoy:

- QST Magazine
- Members-Only Web Services
- Technical Information Service
- Member Discounts
- Outgoing QSL Service
- Continuing Education
- ARRL as an Advocate
- Regulatory Information Branch
- Public Relations for Amateur Radio
- ARRL Field Organization
- ARRL-sponsored contests
- Operating Awards
- Local Clubs
- Amateur Radio Emergency Service
- Hamfests and Conventions
- Volunteer Examiner Coordinator Program



<http://www.arrl.org/membership>

Visit our website at  
<http://www.hcra.org>

## HCRA contact list

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VE Session Liaison, Dave Cote W1FAB (413) 575-2950

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# FROM THE SHACK

## A look forward

### *What we have in store for 2014*

Let's start with the present before we gaze into our future.

If you're an active amateur operator, especially on the HF bands, you really need to spend some time with your rig – like right now! Although Cycle 24 has lived up to its projection of not being a strong solar cycle we have been enjoying quite a few months of superior band openings all the way up to 10 meters. Almost any day since October you can make DX contacts on 15, 12 and 10



meters around the world. If you're a DX'er now is your chance to put some new ones in the log books. Miss your chance here and you may very well have to wait a decade or more for conditions to be this good again. So what are you waiting for? Get down into the shack and have some fun while the sun shines!

Moving on to 2014 for HCRA we've got good stuff scheduled that promises to enhance your fun. Here's a brief *look ahead* into 2014:

#### **Know someone desiring an amateur radio license?**

Do you want to upgrade to General or Extra class? Once again, under the tutelage of John/Kx1x we will be offering a Technician Class license program and General and Extra class study groups this January. The dates are January 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM and the final class/exam at 9:00 AM January 25<sup>th</sup>. Watch our website or contact [John](#) for more details. As always the classes are free but you may wish to purchase study material. Good luck!

**Matt/W1MSW has an outstanding program for this year's meetings.** Starting the New Year off with Fred/K1VR on January 4<sup>th</sup> Matt has just about filled all our meeting dates with interesting and informative speakers and subjects. Mark your calendars and try not to miss a single meeting.

**Our March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting is the annual *Show & Tell* extravaganza.** Like last year expect to see a large assortment of home brewed projects showcasing a wide range of member interests. Details, and prizes, will be announced soon. For now you still have a few months to finish up your project. Time moves fast so get going!

**Foxhunting will return again in 2014!** Keep an eye on the HCRA Facebook page for announcements. Thanks to the efforts of Larry/WB1DBW, Rich/N1KXR, Jeff/NT1K and others we are poised for a fun season. Spend a little

time building some directional antennas, attenuators and more now so YOU can be ready to hit the ground running and bag that elusive fox!

**Field Day returns to School Street Park for 2014.** Under the guidance of EdKB1NWH and Matt/W1MSW and with participation by everyone we'll be ready for another 'kick butt' (KB) Field Day on June 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. I would recommend getting your bid in for a frequency mode early as I feel band captain openings will be going fast. Get ready to have some fun!

**WRTC 2014** and the [ARRL Centennial Convention in July](#)! I'm sure you know HCRA has taken a strong supporting position helping out this world class event on July 8<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup>. This year we will be erecting, maintaining and removing four WRTC contest stations in Medfield, MA. We need *YOUR* support to insure WRTC 2014 puts New England on the map for holding the best WRTC Championship to date. Interested in helping? Contact me anytime via [email](#) or at 413-237-4666. Together we can show the world what HCRA members working together can accomplish!

The weekend following the contest will feature the ARRL National Convention. With events starting on July 17<sup>th</sup> and running through July 20<sup>th</sup> the convention will be extra special featuring great programs, manufacturers and guests from around the world. This year it will be just down the road in Hartford, CT – how cool is that? Don't miss a once in a lifetime opportunity - get down there and enjoy.

## A look back

### *2013 – a great year for HCRA*

Here's a brief look at what we accomplished in 2013. Brief because although it is important to see what we've done we should be looking forward to 'what we can do'.

**January** – Kx1x holds a successful (once again) license class and N1FJ holds our first *Silent Auction*.

**February** – NT1K and N1KXR help over a dozen folks build 2m Yagi's at the February meeting.

**March** – Over a dozen members present great projects at Show & Tell

**April** – The HCRA team holds a successful (100% pass rate) license class in W. Brookfield, MA.

**May** – W1GTT shows us the CT ARES communications trailer

**June** – Field Day at School St. Park deemed a fantastic success! HCRA purchases four WRTC stations to sell to our members.

**July** – HCRA team successfully sets up two WRTC stations in Medfield, MA

**September** – K1KI visits us and talks about the ARRL's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

**October** – Our own K1YO kicks off 'Tech Corner' to rave reviews! This will become a monthly presentation going forward.

*(Continued)*

*(From the Shack, continued)*

**November** – WB1DBY holds our first fox hunt of the year.  
**December** – Another hugely successful HCRA/MTARA Holiday Party is held at the [Steaming Tender](#). Most of the WRTC equipment has been sold.

I'd call this a pretty impressive list, and it only scratches the surface. What it really shows is how active our members are (that's *YOU*) and how *your* efforts contribute to the advancement of our hobby – our thanks go out to each and every one of you!

## **And some changes....**

*Unfortunately not everything stays the same...*

Due to a busy schedule Dave/N1MFL was forced to step down from his Secretary position at HCRA. His presence will be missed and we are looking for someone to step forward and fill his position for the remainder of our 2013/2014 year. If you would like to contribute some of your time helping for three or four meetings it would be greatly appreciated. Please talk to any board member at our next meeting if you're interested.

## **And even more changes:**

After months of thought and considerable 'soul searching' I have decided to step back from the HCRA board after sixteen years. It's been a long run and a lot of fun but I feel it is time for a change.

I started on the board as Secretary in 1998 after an invitation by Larry/K1ILZ and Irv/W6IS. I was honored to be invited and looked forward to every meeting. Irv taught me a lot in preparation for inclusion on the slate as president in 2000. Since then I've held that position except for a few years in 2006/2007 when I served as Program Director for Johnny/KI1A and Jim/KB1JVF(SK). I stepped back into the president position in 2008 continuing to the present

It's been a long and satisfying run and I'm forever grateful for the opportunity to serve. With your help we've progressed a long way in these sixteen years. We've developed a 'Field Day' machine that puts WMA on the map, reduced expenses while improving our meeting and field day locations, embraced new technologies and together we've continued to make HCRA (at least in my opinion) a first class amateur radio organization.

It truly has been an honor to serve HCRA throughout these years.

Sincerely,

*Jim/KK1W*

*(Editor's note: Jim will leave big shoes to fill but leaves HCRA in great shape. What can you do to continue his work?)*

## **Twitter is not the Woodpecker of old...**

*(From HCRA.org, N1KXR)* Many of our older, er, ah, I mean...more experienced hams in the club, may recall the "Russian Woodpecker". Beginning around 1976 till around 1989 when it ceased, this powerful radio signal was heard world wide and when triangulated, the source was found to emanate from inside the Ukraine. Hence the name, the Russian Woodpecker. Twitter's only metonymy with the Russian Woodpecker is the use of the bird metaphor in their names. The Russian Woodpecker wanted to disrupt communications, Twitter wants to facilitate them.

As amateur radio operators, one of our goals is to communicate with as many good friends, and make as many new friends as possible using our radios. Similarly, as a club the HCRA needs to communicate with as many of its members (and our friends) as it can. By using Twitter, the club has one more item in its tool-kit to do just that.

Twitter is easy to use, accessible via PC as well as any number of mobile devices, and has proven itself to be an effective way to share information and ideas. Be it between people who follow other people, or people who follow institutions, such as our club.

A major plus Twitter has going for it, is that while not everyone has time to log onto the internet, then go to websites browsing text files, most everyone has time to look at a quick message sent to them containing 140 characters...or less! That's right, in about 30 seconds you can instantly learn what's happening with your club. These Tweets may include a link that would provide you with more information and content.

So, it's with the above in mind, the Hampden County Radio Association created its own Twitter account called "Hampden County RA" or "@HampdenCountyRA" and we encourage all our members to follow us on Twitter. It's easy to locate, you can find it by simply clicking on this link: <https://twitter.com/HampdenCountyRA>. We look forward to your follows, and all club members who follow @HampdenCountyRA, will be followed back.

One last thing, to alleviate any concerns, be assured this is the official and only account the Hampden County Radio Association has on Twitter.



# Ten Meter Contest

Another 10 Meter Contest has come and gone. We had excellent conditions and no shortage of stations to work around the world. So far, it looks like we had a total of 13 stations on the air with a total combined claimed score of 1,247,716. This was about the same number of stations as last year, but an increase of over 700,000 in points. Great job, everyone, and thank you for participating in an HCRA tradition.

If you don't see your Callsign/score up on the 2013 10 Meter Contest results page on HCRA.org (under Events), please email me your QSO breakdown, the category you entered as, and your total claimed score. Please do this regardless of the number of contacts you made as every point counts! Also, please make sure to send your logs into ARRL no later than 0000 UTC Wednesday, January 14th. For the club to get credit you need to have Hampden County Radio Association spelled out like this:

CLUB: Hampden County Radio Association

73,

Matt – W1MSW

# It's your Zero Beat!

I couldn't publish *Zero Beat* without the help of members providing articles and pictures. My thanks to the following contributors over the past year or so: (in no particular order and I hope I didn't leave anyone out): Jim-KK1W, Matt-W1MSW, Dave-N1MFL, Marty-W1MJB, Rich-N1KXR, Gent Lam-WA1CQF, Larry-W1AST (ex-WB1DBY), John-Kx1x, Ed-KB1NWH, Dave-AA1YW, Dave-WN1E, David-KE2SN, Jeff-NT1K, James-WD1S, Dan-KB1VWQ, Al-N1AW, Doug-KB1ZBL, Mike-NZ1MT.

Send ideas, comments, pictures, articles to N1FJ@arrl.net!

Gent Lam-WA1CQF has written an article on his first Field Day that I will publish in a upcoming issue. Does anyone else care to contribute a Field Day related .doc article? I'll take care of editing and making it look pretty for publication. Field Day has always been one of the main attractions of ham radio for me.

It seems that there will be a big shake-up on the HCRA Board in June. Who wants to step up and help run the club?

73,

Frandy-N1FJ

# HAM Radio License Class and Study Groups

The Hampden County Radio Association will be holding an Amateur Radio Technician Class along with General and Extra Study Groups at the Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Conference Center (auditorium), 575 Beech Street, Holyoke, Mass. This classes and study groups are open to everyone of all ages and affiliations.

There will be three different meeting dates:

Class #1 - Monday, January 13, 2014 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Class #2 - Monday, January 20, 2014 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Class #3 - Saturday, January 25, 2014 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

VE Exam - Saturday, January 25, 2014 at about 3:00 PM

Attendance is NOT taken. If you can't make the Monday evening dates, just come on Saturday.

These condensed meetings are presented with the assumption that individuals will study and take practice tests on their own outside of class time. Our goal is to provide experienced ham radio operators (elmers) to be used as resources when going over the questions and answers that may be on the test.

There is no charge for the class/study group, but the purchase of the ARRL License Manual (\$29) is strongly suggested. Internet links to other resources will be provided. ARRL License Manuals can be ordered for delivery at the first class by contacting John, [kx1x@arrl.net](mailto:kx1x@arrl.net).

The cost to take the test is \$15 per attempt. Two forms of ID are required, including one picture identification.

Questions? Email John/Kx1x, [kx1x@arrl.net](mailto:kx1x@arrl.net)

# HCRA Raffle ending soon!



HCRA's \*250\* raffle prize is a brand-new Yaesu FT-857D HF/VHF/UHF transceiver. The drawing is scheduled for March 7, 2014 (or earlier, if all the tickets are sold before then). Tickets are available at 5 any HCRA meeting, or contact [n1kxr@arrl.net](mailto:n1kxr@arrl.net).